overall shortfall in the bulk availability of LPG, apart from operational and transportation problems. With the measures already taken, the situation has since normalised. The situation is being monitored to ensure regular supplies to the consumers.

Shortage of cooking gas in Indore

1619. SHRI AJIT P. K. JOGI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the consumers of Indore are facing acute shortage of cooking gas due to less number of gas agencies leading to bottlenecks in the distribution system;

(b) if so, what remedial steps are being taken in this regard;

(c) whether there are plans to increase the gas supply and also the number of gas agencies; if so, what are the details thereof; and

(d) what is the position in regard to the three agencies for which applications were invited long back and which were meant to be awarded to the members of scheduled caste and scheduled tribe?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI M. S. GURUPADASWAMY): (a) No, Sir. Presently refill supplies to Indore market are reported to be normal;

(b) Does not arise;

(c) Yes, Sir. Three additional distributorships have been planned for Indore city which are at various stages of processing;

(d) The status of the three distributorships is as follows:

Category	Oil Cos	Status
(i) SC	IOC	To be advertised
(ii) PH	BPC	Applications forwarded to OSB (W)
(iii) OP	HPC	LOI issued on 27-9-1989.

NOTE:

SC—Scheduled Caste
PH—Physically Handicapped
OP—open

Transportation of Natural Gas from Western Fields to Southern Region

1620. SHRI T. R. BALU:
SHRI N. E. BALARAM:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Gas Authority of India Limited has been asked to examine the feasibility of transportation of natural gas from western fields to the Southern Region; and

(b) if so, what is the progress made in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI M. S. GURUPADASWAMY): (a) and (b) An Inter-Ministerial Committee is being appointed to examine the various issues pertaining to the establishment of a Southern Gas Grid.

Declaring Punjab as Industrially Backward State

1621. SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether any fresh steps have been taken by Government to meet the demand of declaring the whole of punjab as industrially backward State; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Setting up of big industries in rural area

1622. SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to vary the earlier Government's policy of encouraging the setting up of big industries in rural areas; and

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor and what are the details of alternative action plan, if any?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Question does not arise in view of the reply to part (a) above.

25 per cent privatisation of the capital of Indian Oil Corporation Ltd.

1623. SHRI N. BALARAM:
SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Oil Corporation has suggested Government to allow 25 per cent privatisation of its capital; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and Government's reatcion thereto?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI M.S. GURUPADASWAMY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does no arise.

DPEA dues on Gentamycin

1624. SHRI DHULESHWAR MEENA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to state:

(a) what are the names of drug companies which were issued notices for recovery on Gentamycin under DPEA;

(b) whether his Ministry has worked out the amount due from each company;

(c) if so, what are the details thereof and amount recovered from each;

(d) whether it is a fact that certain companies overinvoiced the purchases to reduce the profits;

(e) if so, what are the names of the parties;

(f) whether it is also a fact that the purchase rate differs during the same period;

(g) whether it is a fact that such instances have come to the notice of his Ministry; and

(h) what was the lowest rate of purchase and highest rate during the same period and what steps have been taken to investigate the matter?